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Open Letter to the Reverend R. A. K. Runcie

Dear Bob,

I would like to congratulate you on your appointment as Principal of Cuddesdon. I would also like to congratulate Cuddesdon, for there is no doubt in my mind that, under you, its great tradition of sending out good priests and pastors into the Church will be continued.

But I must ask one question. Is this enough? In the past the image of the Church given consciously or unconsciously to ordinands has been a slightly smug one. They have been led to believe that the general picture was one of good humble pastors getting on with their jobs in their own parishes with as much success as could be expected from the state of the world. There were, it is true, interesting experiments going on in places like Halton, Sheffield and Bristol. These were to be observed carefully and copied if they proved themselves, but they were felt to be slightly irrelevant to the main job.

To many of us this picture has proved disastrously false. We find a church so bogged down in the Establishment (in all senses of the word) that not only is it almost impossible for a priest to do his job well, but he is himself rapidly spoilt by the system.

Can you give your young men an overall vision of the Church as it should be? It is true that we are not all agreed on the details of this vision, but almost all of us young men agree on the general principles and know that the Church must undergo something of a revolution if it is to serve this generation. We can do our job in the world and with the help of God we will—but only if the theological colleges do their bit. If you do not succeed in giving your young men this vision, you will see them depart, as the time for each ordination draws near, full of enthusiasm, prayer and ability. Within two years you will hear that ten, twenty, twenty-five per cent have run into serious troubles of one kind or another. If you summon them back in twenty years' time—not just those who will come to a reunion but all of them—you will find it hard to recognise in them the same people who left you. They will have deteriorated through mental, spiritual and physical loneliness, through the often stupid demands of the system, and through the general spirit of inertia and despair which pervades so much of the ordinary places of the Church. It is not enough to turn out good priests—you must turn out priests who are able to *create* the atmosphere and the system in which they can work to the best of their ability to the greater glory of God.

Yours sincerely,

TIMOTHY BEAUMONT.

His Son John

GLEN CAVALIERO

John Kingsman was born in Worcester on May 7th, 1935. His father owned a bicycle shop which was enlarged and extended in the post-war years to sell Television sets and long-playing records, so that John never went short of pocket-money, and spent a fairly care-free boyhood. His parents were mild, uncomplicated folk conventional in an amiable way, and after a move to a "live" parish, regular at church. John was confirmed when he was 15—his parents had objected to an earlier date on the grounds that he would not fully understand what it was about. He was quite an intelligent boy, then at the grammar school: that was why they said it.

In 1953 John won a scholarship in History at Wickham College, Oxford, not long after his decision to become ordained. This latter had resulted from the vicar's suggestion—did John think he had a vocation? John found the idea exciting and thought that perhaps he had. The parents raised no objection—he must make up his own mind. After a short period of imagining himself in the pulpit, visiting the sick, arguing with atheists, and a still shorter period of actual prayer, he made his decision. There followed a first confession (the usual things) and the beginnings of a theological library (C. S. Lewis, the *Imitatio Dei*, and a copy of Gore's *Reconstruction of Belief* presented by the previous vicar's widow). He was happy and hopeful.

Then National Service; and Oxford. The latter really formed his approach to religion. Enthusiasm was to be deplored, but all the same, to be a Christian was to be somebody. You stood out; you had a standpoint, an entrenched position from which to survey the world, and from which, when you nerved yourself up for it, you could sally forth to fight the world. In the vacations the parents submitted patiently to the backwash of many a college controversy: they were reproached about Cyprus, infrequent communions and the Wolfenden report, until the call to wash-up eased a seemingly unbreakable tension. After a bit the father took to making his communion weekly with John when the latter was at home. They were really rather proud of him.

He himself was always a shade uneasy—self-conscious in the conventional atmosphere of home, restive in the highly charged world of Oxford. He oscillated between religious activities (S.C.M. and Pusey House) on the one hand and the company of happily pagan schoolfriends on the other. With the latter he felt slightly guilty, in the former disturbingly wistful. He could almost envy those ordinands who did not feel the lure of the secular world. The

religious bookshops upset him—they appealed to his professional instinct, but seemed to crowd out the things by which he truly lived.

Periodically someone had a religious crisis, but not John, though as he grew older he got those fits of depression peculiar to ordinands —a mixture of sex-frustration, prayer-frustration and the social malaise of an over-lengthy studenthood. By his last term he longed for his theological college, to get on and out—though what "out" really implied had not as yet come alive for him.

He went to Winchester Theological College in Michaelmas, 1959, after a Long Vacation spent working on a farm near his home. He got a 3rd in History which did not disappoint, as his interest in the subject had waned, and he attacked theology with the more vigour. He began rather to like the picture of John Kingsman preparing for the ministry, especially as his life had been curiously empty. He had gone with two crowds at Oxford, and his true self had somehow got lost in between. He had no devouring interest, but sat lightly to several. His reading was desultory. His religion was dutifully performed, though he suppressed his unease at his inability to stay recollected in prayer. Once at Winchester he became less pugnacious about his religion—he had no need to assert himself there, and as the only child not now working he was at a disadvantage at home.

What really kept him going was what keeps us all going—a deep, periodically up-rising delight in his own existence, in his own drama, a relish in the question "what is going to happen next?"

WHAT *IS* GOING TO HAPPEN TO JOHN? He will be ordained next year, where to serve he does not as yet know. What he *does* know is that suddenly it has become real : and he is very much afraid.

Many things have disturbed him, striking at him in this so snugly secure community. There has been for instance a renewed dismay at the zeal of his fellow Christians—they seem to have done so much more than he has. He hasn't been to Lee Abbey or Halton, to Swanwick or on a down-town mission ; he isn't interested in scouting or liturgy or church music ; he is neither Catholic nor Evangelical. It is true that he is beginning to discover that he cares more deeply than he thought about certain things—the need for a fresh approach to preaching, the over-hauling of the parochial system ; but he is inarticulate even when excited, and easily shot down.

He is oppressed too by the weight of things to learn—and unlearn. He rather likes the manhandling of the Bible but is alarmed at questions about the Virgin Birth : he cannot master the Old Testament narrative and comes near to despair at the thought that he will probably never, never read the works of Emil Brunner. The Vice-Principal has accused him of merely reproducing the books, the Chaplain of not reading the right ones. He is oppressed at table by the theological gossip of those who have read it all at University. He has got through his first batch of exams with three fives and a six, which was good going ; but has not,

however, slackened the pace. He works so much under pressure that he is in danger of forgetting that his study is of something real.

Poor John : he feels that at any moment he may see the Gorgon's head, and be turned to stone. Drumming in his ears are the words of the last retreat conductor, words of challenge. Was he truly a committed Christian? Valiantly he attempted to arouse in himself an enthusiasm that he could not feel. So this was it then—he had lost his vocation.

That mood has been left behind, thanks in part to a renewal of hope, and a reluctance to disown the past. But the going is hard. His ever-wandering thoughts churn his prayers into a vortex of pleas of penitence—he gets no joy there, and feels guilty because of it, and depressed again by his own sense of guilt. If this is what Christianity means, what is the point? He is worried too about where to go. Until a definite possibility arises he is at the mercy of his imagination, alternately depicting ill-defined pastoral triumphs and all too clearly defined inadequacies and mistakes. But by and large the optimism prevails. Once he is ordained, he feels, things will sort themselves out. In the meantime he has made friends, keeps up his cricket and has just discovered the novels of Graham Greene. He plans to go on his first parish visit in the Christmas vac.

WHAT AWAITS HIM? It could be so many things, he being what he is. He will presumably go through the usual parish round, popular since he is young, valued by the lonely because he will visit them a lot, feeling lonely too. He will gain confidence but he will read less : God alone knows what will happen to his prayers. He could, suddenly, find out what it is he really wants to do, and they will pray for him at work in Nyasaland or Singapore : he could find *the* girl, and marry her and find himself in her, and fall easily and enthusiastically into the role of a faithful parish priest ; he could find himself engrossed and used in children's work ; he could become a man of committees ; he could contract disease and die ; he could become so lonely and frustrated that he ends up in the Police Court, a target for the gutter press. But whatever happens it will leave unchanged the hold God has upon him. He may twist and turn within it, he may curl up in a ball and refuse to feel it, but that grasp will hold.

It is always the here and now that matters, as we face that self-knowledge which can only issue in fear, and that self-consciousness which can only throw doubt on our vocation. We have nearly all drifted through life, faithless in private to the demands of our profession. It's a disturbing thought, how few of us are Christians at heart.

We look back on our lives. How could we have done other than we did? Could John be expected to know whether he had a vocation at eighteen? Can he be *blamed* for lack of enthusiasm? He was made that way—and who, after all, made him? Everything is God's responsibility : and therefore God's fault? Who are we, anyway?

God alone knows, we feel. And so John waits impatiently for grace, not knowing that what he feels now is as sure a grace as there can be. For he is now being forced to confront himself: and God can only deal with our real selves. He cannot deal with any of the spurious selves, the selves we erect against life and therefore against Him. He cannot speak to the self we merely wish we were, to the John who feigns a piety he does not really feel. He cannot speak to the self we *like* to think we are, to the John who confuses an easy-going nature with tolerance, a lazy mind with a broad one, and a desire to be liked with a consideration for others. He cannot speak to the self who tries to disown itself, to John the undisciplined penitent who tries to dodge the column by feigning dead, who thinks that by denying half his instincts he is surrendering his self. He has, that way, no self *to* surrender. And God cannot, will not, does not speak to the self which resents itself, to the John who panics because he is not what he thinks others think he should be, who says, "it's all destiny" and still rebels. He will only speak to *John*, John Kingsman, the John He has made, the John of this particular blood group, of this particular parentage, with these particular complexes, manias and fears: to the John who likes this kind of food and not that, this type of person and not that, who reacts this way and not that way. For He, God, is Fact and Truth—and until we will acknowledge that, we will not know His grace, though His grace will be about us just the same.

We wonder if we love Him, and indeed to claim that we do, of our own self-enlightened decision, would be arrogance and a contradiction. "For herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us"—*those* words have comforted and inspired millions before we came along.

WE HAVE BEEN CALLED, by virtue of our birthright as a Christian, and we have, in however limited a way, responded. And here now is John, doubtful, depressed, tempted to despair—but our assurance does not rest in ourselves, but in Him Who has called us. Our real self is the self He calls, and only in being ourselves can we fully know His love and at all our own.

Nor need our perplexity and disillusion keep us from Him, for what after all is our call? Is it not "to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren"? Our sufferings are His, and He is in us as we in Him. We are not solitary, however much alone we feel. The mystery of the hidden, misunderstood, rejected Messiah is the secret of our being, too. He is hidden, misunderstood, rejected in us as much as He is in the church: and our hidden, misunderstood, rejected self is only to be found in Him.

So to seek ourselves, so to trust in honesty, and clear thought, so to resist false humility as much as false pride, so to trust what our inner being tells us to do as much as what our outward reason dictates, can

itself be a saving act of faith. For in accepting John Kingsman *as* John Kingsman, in accepting our faults without resentment, and our virtues without pride, we are accepting our destiny, God's foreknowledge of us, and His single purpose. We may, we can, we must allow to Him the responsibility for our creation, of making us what we are. Our physical, mental, spiritual equipment is His business; we can but use it according to His laws—which are, for us, the life of fellowship in Christ, the sacramental, praying life of the church extended into everything we do. We are foreknown and predestined—that is our security: and we are called, so that that security may be known by us and by those among whom we live. And in that calling we are justified. John may be frightened, he may be bewildered, flustered, ashamed, restless, and frustrated; he may regret his past and despair of his future, but what matters is his *present*—and he is John, God's elect, and justified, accounted righteous by Him, loved by Him, created especially by Him and for Him. He says that John is His son, and what He says, goes. We can rest in that.

Church House— Power Station or Repository

It is now four years since the Committee on Central Funds, over most of whose deliberations Mrs. Ridley presided, published its report. It is over two years since the establishment of the Boards for Social Responsibility and for Education. How are things going?

This is difficult for the casual observer to say, because not a great deal of publicity-catching activity has emerged from either Board. The constitution of the Board of Education has been approved by the Assembly, and that Board seems to be settling down to a steady job. Unfortunately, those who assume that because the Board of Education has been safely launched, the other Boards will become equally sea-worthy if only the same construction is used are likely to find themselves in trouble. For one thing, the Board of Education is nothing new. In all but name it has existed for years, and the relationship of the Church of England Council for Education to its constituent councils was much the same as that of the Board. For another, the conditions for an umbrella body to determine the large issues of general policy are ideal when there is a substantial number of constituents. In this case the five—Adults, Youth,

Children, Schools, and Training Colleges—justify a co-ordinator! Yet again, all the Councils (except the Adult Council) know pretty clearly what their jobs are, and, what is perhaps more important, what are *not* their respective concerns. Lastly, though the arguments for and against Church schools are trundled out dutifully by those with tender consciences whenever the the occasion arises, the system of Church Schools and Training Colleges is too reassuring a prestige-symbol for people to push their theological convictions to the limit by voting for their abolition. And in the educational field generally people expect the Church to have a say, if only on the principle of "catch 'em young" (though the state of the Sunday Schools is hardly reassuring). All in all, in spite of difficulties, there is reason to be thankful that the course is set reasonably fair for the Board of Education.

Not so with the Board for Social Responsibility. There the storm clouds have been gathering, and the announcement that the Board's first general secretary has resigned (apparently in protest) and gone to television is hardly reassuring. In spite of some interesting work, the Board seems not yet to have got off the ground. And if rumour is to be believed, that the Board of Education pattern is being used as a model for the Social Responsibility Board's structure, the omens are indeed poor. A look at the differences in situation shows all too plainly why.

For one thing, the Board is new, and not only new in structure. The whole idea of a Board for Social Responsibility is something that the Church of England has not so far known. What is social responsibility anyway? A question like this tends to be received in embarrassed silence by those who should know. After a while they light up, "Of course, there's drink, sex, and gambling—and there is always the Industrial Christian Fellowship". And when members of the Church Assembly are asked why they voted for the establishment of a body "to promote and co-ordinate the thought and action of the Church in matters affecting family, social and industrial life", they don't really know. The fact is that the Methodists have a Christian Citizenship Department, the British Council of Churches a Social Responsibility Department and the Anglican provinces in North America cognate bodies. Moreover, ecumenical thinking and action since the war has been substantially in this sphere. So the Church of England has had to follow suit.

This of course is no bad thing. If the ecumenical movement does nothing else than push the churches into learning from one another, it will on this account alone have justified its existence. But, has the Church of England really learnt? One doubts it as yet. Christian social action in the ecumenical context has arisen largely in response to inescapable crisis situations; and there are no such situations here. Christian social action has been forced on churches operating in societies which have been largely secularised; but Britain is a Christian country—or is it? And Christian social action has been

developed by churches which have no organic entry to the corridors of power ; and in this country the establishment assures the Bishops a place in them, albeit at a point where most important decisions have already been taken.

So the Church also has its Board, but woe betide it if it rocks the boat. Let it rather take its cue from the traditional pattern of the Church's concern with the social sphere. Let it remember that the Church of England Temperance Society, the Public Morality Council, the Moral Welfare Council and all the rest have been at it for generations. And though more than one Bishop confesses in the privacy of his study that he knows them one and all to be redundant and substantially wasting their time and money, no inducements would bring him to do anything about any of them in public. The vested interests are too strong.

The Board, then, is something new—and this is enough to damn it. But that is not all.

The Board at present tries to co-ordinate a single council. To be fair, the Ridley Committee thought there were two. But the Social and Industrial Council was in a blessed state : it had no staff. This meant that it could act on its convictions and go into dissolution when it thought it had done its job. This moment came when the report on The Task of the Church in Relation to Industry was completed early in 1959. This report for the first time faced the facts about the cause of the Church's failure to make a dent of any kind on industrial England, and because it did so, it only just survived its passage through the Assembly. Admittedly the report recommended the setting up of a new body, and this body is at long last beginning to take shape. But to co-ordinate even two bodies is no full-time job for a full-blown Board. If the two are on the same wave-length they will co-ordinate without assistance ; if they are not, no Board will do it for them. And if, as is likely to be the case here, the two constituent bodies operate on entirely different presuppositions about the nature of the Church's task in society, and one of them at least has no intentions of letting itself be co-ordinated, the outlook for the Board is bleak indeed.

Even the Ridley Committee, which was anxious enough in all conscience, to tread warily, said that,

> "the success of such a (Board) system depends not only on collective control but also on the exercise by the subordinate bodies and their staffs of a real measure of discipline. There must be a realisation that the whole is greater than the part, and that all are working to the same end as servants of the parent organisation. Vested interests must be surrendered and the efforts of all directed to a common purpose."*

When even these minimal requirements are not met, any attempt to co-ordinate becomes a farce.

* Committee on Central Funds Report, p. 16.

Yet again, the Councils of a Board must know pretty clearly what their jobs are. In the educational field this is more or less the case. In the field of social responsibility it is not. What is moral welfare? Where does it begin and where does it end? Is the maintenance of field workers, inadequately trained and badly paid, by voluntary committees, but yet C. of E., better than a really competent service handled by the local authority, but "merely" open to the service of convinced and articulate Christians? What do we mean by social work, and what should be the Church's place in it? How do Christians take their political responsibilities seriously? Where does individual marching, from Aldermaston or anywhere else fit into the Church's witness in the world? One could go on *ad infinitum*. And none of these questions have been frankly and systematically faced.

And so church people get no help at the very point where they need it most. They know they ought not to steal, to covet, to commit fornication. They do *not* know how to face creatively the pressures of a mass society, or how to exercise their responsibility for their fellows in South Africa or behind the iron curtain. There are here fundamental questions of theological understanding and if the Board is to do its job, it must begin by tackling these.

And what else comes under social responsibility? The Bishops at Lambeth energetically drafted and passed 131 resolutions. The last thirty-one were remitted to the Board. One supposes that Bishops do not pass resolutions for the fun of it; one assumes that they mean what they say. How then do they propose to tackle those questions in the economic, communal, cultural, political and international spheres which go far beyond the briefs of bodies concerned with either moral welfare or industry? Even if Lambeth had not happened, the questions would have been there, and those who want to exercise social responsibility cannot evade them. After all, though the Board is new, and the Church is lamentably complacent, it has ample precedent for doing better. F. D. Maurice, Kingsley, Scott-Holland and Temple, to mention only a few, have gone before, and though they have largely cried in the wilderness, they have in their generation borne witness to the fact that the Church's concern with society is not exhausted by its denunciation of the carnal sins; that the structures of society matter, and that a good dose of Marxist determinism is necessary if the heresy of salvation *out of* the world is finally to be destroyed.

When all this is recognised the need to develop from this jumble a coherent concept of social responsibility is demonstrated overwhelmingly. And this is the Board's first job. Since the Board has to work this out for itself, it can hardly hand out briefs to constituent bodies; indeed it cannot know what sort of constituent bodies it wants. Hence it is not like Education and unless this is realised it will waste its own time and the Church's money. A long period of closely integrated thought and experimental action is needed if

anything useful is to emerge. This demands what the Ridley Committee required—self-discipline and a sense of proportion. Above all it demands a common mind about the Church's task in society.

What is the Church about when it meddles in legislation? When it makes pronouncement on foreign or colonial policy? When it claims some communal activity or service as essentially more Christian than another? What criteria are applied in deciding that betting boxes are better than betting shops, or that one play is more moral than another? A great deal of busy-ness goes into ensuring that the Church's voice is heard. But the sound of the voice, when it succeeds, is often hardly audible, or jarring rather than either challenging or comforting.

The Church has a prophetic task and unpopularity is a by-product of prophecy. It need not therefore worry about unpopularity: it *does* need to worry about the nature of prophecy and whether it is being true to this. As it is, one cannot help feeling that when the daily papers go to town on a particularly inept Church utterance, then for once the Church gets what it deserves, and *vox populi* is *vox die*. It is hardly likely that the ill-considered attempts of ecclesiastical busybodies to prescribe how people shall spend their time and use their money are very pleasing to the Lord of Hosts.

But if not this, what then is the Church's task in society? Let's face it: we do not know. And what is more, the question is wrongly put. Ultimately there is an answer only to the question, "what does God call the Church (or the individual Christian) to do in this *particular* situation?" And all that the Church (or the Christian) can do, is to develop the machinery, spiritual and technical, to enable the answer to be found when the situation arises.

The Board is a piece of machinery. How should it be constructed? It must be flexible. The Church's task is eternal; hence it is *ever-changing* in response to the needs of the situation. Hence precedent is not much use: imagination is. Again the Church's task is to *serve men* in their communities. The Board must not therefore seek to assert the Church's place; it must be prepared to *lose* it. It must work in ways and in places where the important decisions are taken, even though the credit titles go to someone else. And it must *recognise the Spirit* blowing where it listeth; thus it cannot write off an initiative because it has not come from the ecclesiastical stable. Lastly the Board machine must be *demonstrative*. The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, and the task of the Church is to help men see this and be thankful. Indeed it might be said that this is the great and only task of the Church, and that it ceases to be the Church when it ceases to perform it. And that this is what is happening. The failure of so much of ecclesiastical activity to receive a blessing is due to the fact that, in the last analysis, it is concerned with the saving of the Church rather than the world and

the assertion of the Church's precedence rather than the demonstration of its service. The Church has joined the status seekers.

Having described the sort of machinery needed, how do we get it? Clearly the Ridley report is not redundant: indeed it has not yet been tried. And it is applicable to the situation which the Church faces but to apply it takes courage. Such phrases as "collective control", "a real measure of discipline" and "vested interests must be surrendered" are normally avoided like the plague in ecclesiastical documents. The fact that Mrs. Ridley's committee saw no way of avoiding them suggests that they were up against it. And recent history certainly bears them out. It is because no-one has had the courage to take the Ridley report at its word and apply it that we are where we are.

It is a curious reflection that the Church is the most hierarchical social structure left in the land, and yet has no understanding of the concept of authority. And this at a time when all democratically ordered sectors of the national life depend for their existence on such an understanding. Is it likely that the Lord will exempt the Church from such dependence, merely because it is the Church, and thinks it has no need of such mundane props?

Again, the Church proclaims an objective fact. But there is no organisation where the subjective factor so bedevils the taking of decisions. Yet again, the Church proclaims the truth. But expediency is the clue to ecclesiastical success.

Since this is so, and there is little point is pretending it is not, let Ridley have a chance. Things could not get worse: they might get better. Select a Board, and mind you do it well. This needs eyes firmly on the ball, and a leaf out of Sir David Eccles' book would do no harm. If the Church is to serve society *today*, let those who run the Board be those who know society today, and preferably tomorrow. It is unlikely that they will be the people one normally thinks of, but never mind. If Eccles can go into the highways and by-ways, so can the Church.

Then give the Board effective "control"; let it exact "a real measure of discipline" from its constituents and let it demand the surrender of "vested interests" where it thinks fit. Let it fraternise with Father Huddleston: it could find worse company; let it say things which may be injudicious, as long as they are true; and let it encourage those who have found a way of Christian living for this age, be the pattern what it may.

There is no doubt that the result would be devastating. But the Church would come alive, and would be seen to live by those who look for life and life abundant.

Comment

Summit fiasco, Great Power prestige, Japanese tidal waves, these in the last few weeks, not surprisingly, have driven out of journalistic minds a significant date, May 11th. On that date we were led to believe that the Bishop of Johannesburg would disclose to the world the information which made his secret journey via Swaziland to this country necessary ; undisclosed information about the Sharpeville atrocity. Until then, despite a hostile press conference and searching questions about the reason for the apparent abandonment of his diocese and of those fighting with him against the Nationalist Government, judgement was rightly suspended, by those most closely involved. May 11th came and went, without disclosures of any sort. The meeting was factually reported, *The Church Times*, who earlier had given the lead made no comment. The rest of the press, we must suppose, had given the Bishop up as no longer newsworthy.

In default of any observations about all this, and at the risk of severe criticism, we feel this should be said : the Bishop was wrongly advised by his diocesan advisers, by the High Commissioner and by the Archbishop of Cape Town : he should have listened to his African advisers, who wanted him to stay. But it was up to him to disregard advice and the responsibility of his actions is his.

He did wrong to leave as by so doing, first he deserted the cause he had championed for so long, and second was seen by the world to do so. As to (1), the damage is done. Natural modesty might well blind the Bishop to his own significance in the post-Sharpeville months and that is a sufficient excuse for (2).

No doubt events in Africa will quieten down, but one of the last links between black and white will have gone. It has been said that the only good things done in the racial mess of South Africa have been done by High Anglicans. This cannot now be said with the same confidence. We would like the Bishop to announce in public that he had been misinformed about British public opinion into supposing he possessed special information which required his presence outside Africa to disclose ; and having admitted his wholly pardonable error of judgement, he should make every effort to return to his job in Africa as soon as possible. Even now it may be too late.

* * * *

It is generally assumed that we need more clergy, and James Miller's article in this issue talks of the "acute dearth" of clergy in England. Certainly CACTM has hitherto worked on this assumption, and does everything it can (including higher pay, like the army) to step up the number of recruits. But it is not succeeding,

and in ten years' time the hope of a parson in every parish will have vanished.

It is easy to sneer at such gloom as faithless. It is harder, but more useful, to think now how to adjust. Yet the fact that the Bishop of Southwell has hurried out his new book, *Asking the Right Questions* so soon after *Vocation and Ministry* makes it all too obvious how reluctant the Church is to have Fewer but better clergy. The parishes, and enough men with collars on to feed them, are still the sacred cow of the Church of England. No wonder Nigel Dennis could satirize religion as the making of *Moo*. An enormous number of parish clergy, admirable men, are under-employed and bored; trying to sweat themselves into believing that theirs is a full-time job when in many cases it clearly is not. The Church's problem is not shortage of manpower, but how to use what it has.

We talk of the laity, and the ministry of the laity, and still have not learnt how to channel lay enthusiasm. Up and down the country Christian Stewardship Campaigns are at last giving vent to this zeal. But too often, through the belief that religion is the clergyman's job, and all that laymen can do is raise money, these campaigns have been misconceived. If the ministry of the laity means anything, it means surely using the laity in the pastoral work of the church, not just turning men into lay-readers to help vicar take services. The age of leisure is upon us, and Church can seize the opportunity and let its laity minister in and around its parish churches.

Then it can redeploy its cadre of fully-trained clergy. Instead of spreading them out with a church apiece as it now tries to do, where half the time they spend trying to invent themselves jobs, it can train them as experts in the fields where their talents lie. So in the typical conurbation of 50,000, instead of the present pattern of a dozen or more clergy running seven or eight parishes in petty competition, the Church could, if it were so minded, have in ten years' time a local bishop, and six or seven other clergy, including perhaps a psychiatrist, a highly-qualified social worker, an experienced youth leader, and so on, centrally organised but with oversight each of a parish, which would be run in detail by the ordained laity whose ministry at the moment is there for the asking. Southwark may even now be leading the way towards this.

* * * *

We had always heard that the real power in the Church of England was the Mothers' Union, but we could never fully square this with the music-hall-joke image (a mixture of mother-in-law and trades union official) which the Mothers' Union projects to the world. Prominent members of this august body are well aware of the joke and in recent months have been preparing (for discussion very shortly) a full survey of their present strength and weakness, their plans for improving their organisation, attracting new members and showing themselves to be fully in touch with present-day sociological

tendencies. In point of fact, our correspondent tells us, the young members' division, whose annual conference he recently addressed on "The Power of the Press", is quite different from what he had imagined. He met a wide social range of mothers, who appeared to average four children each, less than three was definitely felt to be inadequate. They presented collectively a trim, devout, business-like cheerfulness that was neither hearty nor overpowering. And many of them read *Prism*. We often wondered who were our most reliable supporters, but we never expected them to be located so close to us as Mary Sumner House.

* * * *

If *Prism* hasn't done anything else (and it probably hasn't) it has given Valerie Pitt room to express herself. *Prism* readers are still evenly divided into those who have given it up because of her and those who can't bother with anything *except* her. Recently she has left the *Prism* nest for the *Church of England Newspaper*, whose excellent new editor commissioned a series of articles from her on all the prismatic topics. Apart from a certain muting of tone she has let readers have it, and in a recent number (after she had thrashed direct converters within an inch of their lives) they came back at her in the correspondence columns. Letters varied from the respectful ("such a clear-sighted and respected Christian") to the infuriated ("This lady"). Opposite her last article appeared a protest by the Rev. T. Dudley-Smith which mingled mock humility ("Your contributor is far cleverer than I am—not a very difficult thing to be) with reverential appeals to the unintellectualness of the early Christians. Part of evangelicalism, according to this correspondence is philistinism, theological ignorance and a total unconcern with the sensitiveness involved in most human relationships. The point about "trying to tell a friend what Christ means to me and what He could mean to my friend" is that either you do this so surreptitiously—putting him on your intercession list, as Fr. Maycock recently suggested—that he won't notice (which isn't at all what Fr. Dudley-Smith means) or that *he won't be your friend any more*. He may not say "If you don't shut up about Jesus I'll never speak to you again", but he may well say to himself that the sort of contentment in each other's company which is one aspect of friendship is now no longer possible.

There is a very fundamental point here—the limitations of direct evangelism, the importance of dogma, the religious significance of personal relationships, the adaptation of "conversion-techniques" to the intellectual ability of the convertees. *Church of England Newspaper* readers, despite Valerie Pitt, think one thing, *Prism* readers, pretty solidly, think another.

* * * *

Whereas letters in the *Church of England Newspaper* about Valerie Pitt were critical because she took dogma, intelligence and friendship

seriously, another crop of letters about M.R.A. (which denies all three) waxed ecstatic about Frank Buchman. This, in the *Church of England Newspaper*, suggests that the Clergy prefer anti-communism to the Nicene Creed—on which no further comment is possible.

* * * *

And while we are pitching into the *Church of England Newspaper*, in spite of its improvement under new management, we will quote three extracts from a recent *Church of England Newspaper* article on Africa :

> "Practically all the blood which has been shed has been shed out in the African townships, and apart from the Sharpville shootings—which are a sad blot on our history—any killings which still continue are almost entirely the work of African gangsters and intimidators of their own people."
>
> "I am convinced that it (Apartheid) is a sincere effort on the part of the South African Government to find a solution to the overwhelming problem that a multi-racial community, in which the ratio of black to white is 10—3, produces."
>
> "In an audience of highly intelligent students a few days ago, I asked how many of them had read Father Huddleston's *Naught for Your Comfort*. About half present put up their hands. To my second question, as to who had read *You are Wrong Father Huddleston*, very few raised their hands. But if we are going to see the problem fairly and squarely, should we not read both sides and see the two extremes? By doing this we are more likely to arrive at a middle and more balanced assessment."

As one who has read both books several times, for professional reasons, I can assure anybody who needs reassurance (which won't include most *Prism* readers) that the abysmal badness of the second book simply adds further cogency, if that were needed, to the first. And the implied judgement that Fr. Huddleston has put up a "case" which can be answered on equal terms is either dishonest (if the writer has read the books in question) or ignorant (if she has not).

* * * *

"All the conferences are failures", said the advertisement, quoting, of course, Isaiah 8 and Joel 2 : 32 in support. Delighted to find that anybody with such prismatic views on the value of conferences should also have the money to advertise the opinion we wrote off for the free leaflets to the Panacea Society, Bedford, England—surely one of the nicest addresses imaginable. In due course, back came the leaflets.

> "All our difficulties," we are informed, "are due to the fact that for 6,000 years we have lived under Negation, and Negation is the devil."

The trouble, it seems, is due to the fall of man under the rule of devils and angels, and all the troubles of the world duly follow and no-one knows what to do about it. But the Panacea people do.

> "A knowledge of the 6,000 years is the solution to every problem .... All are blessed indeed who are *not ignorant today of this one thing*, the 6,000 days as 6 days of God's week."

Get it? The society was founded in the works of "Eight Modern Prophets" (not our caps); apparently a visitation of Healing and Help was expected around 1923—7, and unlike other expectations, this visitation came up to scratch. There is a book *Healing and Help by Water and the Spirit*, which, so the leaflet says, will be supplied, "without money and without price" (Isaiah, of course) and reading through a strip of white paper stuck over part of the leaflet you are encouraged to buy books like this (which will be lent in cases of extreme hardship) to gain health and a knowledge of World Redemption.

> "A bishop" (says the pamphlet) "on hearing of our belief that sin, sickness and death will cease on this earth said, 'If the Panacea Society believes all this it should make itself better known!' Another Bishop has asked: 'What is the Panacea Society all about?' "

A good point by the first bishop, and a fair question by the second. Well done, both. We hope the above remarks have enlightened them.

* * * *

Talking books might seem like a contradiction in terms, but when one landed with a discreet thump on our desk we knew it was alright. This is *The Story of Jesus*, a compact and high-powered text of the gospels with some penetrating implications for those with eyes to see, by Guy Brenton. Inside the glossy cover-sleeve, on which the well-known face of John Betjeman consorts rather oddly with an El Greco-ish Crucifixion, a small-sized record is hidden. On this Betjeman reads the Bible to us, simply and rather fast, very well. I don't know who exactly will buy this, but the publishers are confident that they have got a winner. Whoever does will have a rare treat for a modest price—8/6d.

Reading Between the Figures

James Miller

When *Facts and Figures about the Church of England*, 1959 was published last September by the Church Information Office it was greeted by *Prism* with something very like derision (*Prism*, November, 1959); and the object of this article is not to repair that deficiency but to examine some of these facts and figures, having regard to the immediate needs of the Church. There is enough material in the

book for a dozen such articles, so I will confine myself to the question of clerical manpower.

That excellent symposium *Part-time Priests?* can leave nobody in doubt that there is an acute dearth of clergy in the Provinces of Canterbury and York, not to mention the other Provinces of the Anglican Communion. The remedy, however, is far from obvious. The 534 men ordained to the diaconate last year represent a continuation of the upward trend in ordinations, but they are not sufficient to maintain the present position, let alone take advantage of new evangelistic and pastoral opportunities. *Facts and Figures*, however, tells us in column 19 of Table I that before we cry "we want more clergy", we must press for a more equitable distribution of the clergy we already have. If we take the population of each diocese, and divide it by the number of its incumbents and curates, some appalling contrasts emerge. For Hereford this figure, the People-to-Priest Ratio (PPR for short), is as low as 1,054, while Bath and Wells fares nearly as well with a PPR of 1,455. At the other end of the scale is Birmingham, with a PPR of 7,264. The implications of this are obvious; the clergy are not working where the people live, but before we descend on Herefordshire, South Shropshire and Somerset and deport half the clergy therein to Birmingham, one or two other factors need to be considered, even though the Bishop of Birmingham reckons that his diocesan PPR is more like 13,000.*

First, we would expect the Church of England to be much better supported in Hereford and Bath and Wells than it is in Birmingham. Where a priest has the oversight of about a thousand people he can get to know a large proportion of his parishioners, and he is more readily available for private spiritual ministrations. Further, in a largely rural society he can still be the *persona* of the parish, as his predecessors were. Multiply this figure by seven (or, if you incline more towards the Bishop of Birmingham's estimate than to the Central Board of Finance's calculations, by thirteen—it makes no difference at this stage), and the picture is reversed. Parochial boundaries are almost meaningless, and people do not "belong" to Selly Hill or Acocks Green, but to the A.E.U. or Aston Villa Supporters Club. The Church of England is parochial in theory only; in practice it has become every whit as congregational as the Elizabethan Separatists could have desired. They wanted "Reformation without tarrying for anie". The Church of England tarried for the Industrial Revolution, which inflicted upon her a Reformation of an entirely different nature and which, by her retention of the

* Thus the *Birmingham Mail*, 25th September, 1959; I suspect that the Bishop was thinking of urban Birmingham and Smethwick, in which case he may well be right. The same Table in *Facts and Figures* informs us that the Diocese of Birmingham is 48% rural, while from Table 10 we learn that nine of its livings contain fewer than 750 inhabitants.

parson's freehold and the parochial system, she has steadily refused to acknowledge.

It is difficult to measure the degree of support which the Church receives, but if we are only going to make comparisons between dioceses, column 12 of Table 29 will serve us well. This gives the ratio of Easter Communicants per thousand of the population aged fifteen and over. Sure enough, Hereford heads the list here, *facile princeps* with an Easter Communicant Ratio (which I shall call ECR in future) of 172 per thousand, and Bath and Wells comes next with 139. Birmingham comes, as we would expect, 43rd and last with 34; think what this means—only $3\frac{1}{2}\%$ of the adult population receiving the Sacrament at Easter from the altars of the Established Church! All sorts of suggestions have been made to try and explain this fact; one high-ranking official in Church House (not, of course, a statistician) who ought to have known better, spoke about people who went to Scotland or the Continent for Easter, and of those who, being away at college or making their retreat at this time, made their Communion in an extra-parochial chapel. Such people undoubtedly exist, but not in sufficient numbers to make any difference to these figures.

Secondly, what of the other dioceses? We have seen the remarkable correlation between the PPR and the ECR in the best and worst-staffed dioceses. There are forty other dioceses; does this principle of a low PPR producing a high ECR obtain everywhere? I have not been able to make exact calculations, but the answer is definitely in the negative; there are some surprising variations. It so happens that Oxford has the 14th lowest PPR (2,136) and the 14th highest ECR (96), but this, although it supports the principle, is really a coincidence.

The widest variations are both to be found in the North-West. On the credit side, Blackburn has a PPR of 3,885, higher than the national average, and which might lead us to expect an ECR of about 70. In fact the ECR is 97. Blackburn is three parts rural to one part urban, but it contains four County Boroughs (Blackburn, Blackpool, Burnley and Preston) and large centres of industry and population in Accrington, Clitheroe, Lancaster, Colne and Fleetwood, the latter being still one parish of nearly 30,000 inhabitants. Imagine for a moment that Blackburn were as well staffed as the average English diocese, and that the ECR rose correspondingly. Then imagine the effect produced by every diocese displaying the vigour of Blackburn. The national ECR would rise to 116, a figure never even approached in living memory (see Table 30), and there would be an increase of nearly $1\frac{1}{2}$ *million* Easter Communicants!

At the other end of the scale lies Sodor and Man. With a PPR of 1,520 it is the fourth best-staffed diocese, and we might reasonably expect an ECR of 120 to 125, but we find a figure of 92, which is lower than Blackburn. As this baffled me I asked Flt.-Lt. R. F.

Neuss, D.F.C., the Head of the Statistical Unit, if he could offer any explanation. He said that he had now discovered that the average age of the incumbents in Sodor and Man is 57 years, whereas in Blackburn it is 49. The average age of all the 2,813 incumbents in the Province of York at the 31st December, 1959, was 52 and, in fact, none of the 25 incumbents in Sodor and Man are under 40, but 5 of them have had their seventieth birthday. By comparison, of the 237 Blackburn incumbents 45 are under 40 and only 13 over 70. Here, obviously, is part of the answer ; Blackburn may be under-staffed, but furtunately it is staffed by comparatively young and energetic priests.

Thirdly, it now seems clear that a well-staffed diocese is not necessarily a guarantee of flourishing Church life, but that something ought to be done, and done quickly, about Birmingham and other insufficiently-staffed dioceses. Many readers of *Prism* will have seen the Rev. A. C. Smith's article entitled "An Experiment in Lincolnshire" in the February, 1960, issue of *Theology*. Mr. Smith is the Rural Dean of Hill North ; Rector of South Ormsby with Ketsby, Calceby and Driby ; Rector of Harrington with Brinkhill ; Rector of Somersby with Bag Enderby ; Rector of Tetford with Salmonby ; Rector of Ruckland with Farforth and Maidenwell ; Rector of Oxcombe ; and Minister of the Chapel of Ease of Worlaby. His article describes how the "South Ormsby Group" is managed. As well as a deaconess and a reader, Mr. Smith has the assistance of a priest and a deacon, and gives a fascinating account of rural parochialia, leaving the reader in no doubt that a fine piece of work is being done. What Mr. Smith fails to mention is that the total population of his 15 parishes at the 1951 Census was only 982. This gives him a PPR of 327! We dare not say : "Remove Mr. Smith's assistant priest and send him to Hornchurch (Census population 52,322), and send his deacon to Yardley (49,733)". It seems that the statisticians in Church House can only supply part of the answer, and indeed they would not claim anything more than this. The Church Assembly could, I suppose, pass a Measure whereby every parochial clergyman had the oversight of the same number of people per square mile, but there are so many other factors to be considered that if such a Measure were to receive the Royal Assent we should be well on the way to destroying the ethos of the Church of England. The Bishop of Southwell's weighty judgment reinforces this argument.

> "The Church of England", he writes, "lives in its parishes and its Ministry is a territorial ministry. Accordingly any inquiry into manpower must be conducted primarily in those terms. Calculations based on a mathematical ratio, as though we had merely to ask to how many people can one priest be expected to minister and then do the sum, are unreal and academic."*

* *Vocation and Ministry*, p. 62.

Instead of asking "Why doesn't somebody do something about this?" we are left wondering whether in fact anything can be done. Having written a rather sad story so far, I want to finish by reporting that something *is* going to be done. A "cloud no bigger than a man's hand" has already appeared on the horizon. On 17th December, Lieutenant-Colonel H. E. Madge, who is Secretary of the Winchester Diocesan Board of Finance and a member of the House of Laity of the Church Assembly, tabled a motion,

> "That a Commission be appointed to consider, in the light of changing circumstances, the system of the payment and deployment of the Clergy, and to make recommendations."

When the Church Assembly met in February there was no time to debate this motion, but I understand that it will be given high priority for the Summer Session. The question of clergy remuneration is outside the scope of this article, but the idea of a Commission to deal with the deployment of such clerical manpower as we have is more exciting than it sounds at first. The pessimists will say :

> "This is no more use than the Liturgical Commission ; they'll produce a report in five years' time which will be out of date as soon as it's printed."

I do not share this view, for this reason :—A new edition of *Facts and Figures* is being planned, which will contain a good deal of hitherto unknown statistical information about the clergy, especially concerning their age and distribution. When I was last in Church House the statisticians were hard at work assembling the necessary data, which will be just the kind of information that this Commission, if it is appointed, will need. In other words, the Commission's donkey-work is already being done, and I should expect to see some quick results, provided, of course, that suitable people are appointed to serve on the Commission. Add to this ray of hope the increasing number of younger* men being ordained each year, and a real sunbeam illuminates what otherwise appears a dark and gloomy scene. A lot will depend on the amount of intelligent support that the gallant Colonel receives in July, but once the Commission is set up we can await a Report which will be, like Jonathan Joe's wheelbarrow, full of surprises.

* In 1958 34 men under the age of 25 were made deacons ; in 1959 this number rose to 50. There was also an increase in the ordination of men in their early sixties. The average age at ordination fell from 33 to about 31½, and over half the men ordained were in their late twenties ; strangely enough, the total number of these men fell slightly in 1959. The gradual running-down of National Service is the main, but not the only reason for this.

Another Letter to the Vicar

My dear Vicar,

At last I have been to an Annual Vestry and Church Meeting at which the churchwardens have admitted that the Parish Church is solvent. I can't remember how many years it has been now that we have all sat through the Presentation of Accounts, dutifully looking now at this line and now at that, and waiting to join in under our breaths when the Treasurer reaches his peroration—for it has always been the same—"And next year, ladies and gentlemen, I'm afraid we shall be a bit further in the red". But not last Friday : we have a solid Credit Balance now and everybody is saying that that is only a start ; there is wild talk of thousands for Missions and a Repairs and Improvements fund which can be left to accumulate.

It is all that Christian Stewardship campaign which has transformed the look of the accounts. Nobody can say that it doesn't work. It brings in the money all right. But there are some of us who have not yet had the answers to the first questions that we wanted to ask when the whole thing began ; but we did not like then to seem discouraging while you were so enthusiastic. What *is* Christian Stewardship? Where does it come from? "Steward" is hardly an everyday word with a clear meaning for us : I asked my schoolboy son, who knows everything, what a steward was, and he told me it was a man who brought you a basin on a ship. My own memory gives a picture of a sort of estate manager for a landed gentleman—like the Unjust one who is fairly prominent in the Christian scriptures. But the thing about a steward of that kind is that there is only one on each estate, and it is not very easy to see how we can all be stewards together. That kind of steward might serve as an image of the bishop, I suppose, who would be Paul's "steward of the mysteries". But we can't all be stewards of the Church's properties, and so I suppose you and the hireling gospellers of stewardship mean to make us stewards of our own property, or treat all our money and possessions as a trust held for God, wise and thrifty guardians of somebody else's things. Really, you know, *trustees* would be a better word, and one suspects that *stewards* has been chosen because it has an Elizabethan ring and is warm and vague. But where in the New Testament do you find anything to say that Christians should husband their properties prudently as a trust held for God? I have been looking, as far as I can find, the original Christian duty was to give the lot away—all I can see is,

> "Take no thought for the morrow, what ye will eat or wherewithal ye will be clothed . . ."

and the story of the Rich Fool who certainly guarded his property,

(that was why he was a fool) and the widow who was commended because she gave away her all.

I know that the whole campaign only means that you think we ought to give more money to the church. We don't mind that—we are giving it, and most of us have signed alarming promises to go on and on. That professional chap that came down at the beginning was effective enough at making the object plain to us all; you know, we really went away from the first meeting fairly convinced that we shouldn't get to heaven unless we paid up systematically. And then, when I got home again, I had a strange feeling that it had all happened before: the contractor coming to beat up the cash for the Church, and taking his percentage, and issuing his impressive receipts. It did happen before, and I'm worried . . . last time it was the signal for the Reformation. Ever since then, I have thought of the professionals as Fugger and Company, purveyors of indulgences. There was at the back of our minds a real Reformation resentment, too; but you had introduced the man, and we heard him out for your sake; but why do we want a businessman from outside the parish to come and tell us our duty, if it is our duty? Of course, he was very shrewd; he made it seem only commonsense to budget and tabulate and calculate until we had every penny traced and tabbed; to allow so much for this and so much for that, and *always*, whatever other expenses we had, to allow for a fair "sacrifice" for Mother Church; not actually a tithe, of course, in these days—a smaller percentage is quite enough for respectability in these times. It was all so sound, but I don't believe it was Christian at all, from beginning to end. Where on earth does it fit with "Sell all you have, and give to the poor"? The Church seems to me to be going back behind Christ to the Pharisees; it is not "Be ye therefore perfect" but "Take care to be respectably good".

Thank goodness there are not going to be any more dinners; that was an embarrassing evening. You know how our parish doesn't like eating in public, or having speeches after food like some American convention. What on earth has happened to the church if, in order to find the appearance of fellowship, it has to go to a pub for it? Anyway, we all knew how much the function was costing, and most of us felt it rather shameful when the Church was putting out an appeal for money urgently needed—in a parish like ours, where all the people have fridges full of food at home.

At least, Father, you can see the money coming in. But we are being left with a dim idea of what stewardship is, and a very wrong idea of what Christ said about money. Frankly, we trust you, we have grasped that you want us to give more money, and we think you have chosen an extremely odd way of telling us; but we shall give it. One of my brighter pew-mates who is somewhat cynical,

has been keeping a cunning eye on the fussier Church Councillors who have been cheer-leading in the campaign (he swears that they have learnt to call themselves "organisators"); what he says is, "Give each of them a rosette to wear, marked 'Christian Steward' and let the rest of us stay plain Christians".

Yours sincerely,

G. C. Darton.

Other Letters

THE SCANDAL OF SWEDEN

From our Swedish correspondent:

Mr. Toy's article "The Scandal of Sweden" printed in your May number fairly revealed the nature of the scandal to those who know the situation here. Yet I feel that some of the implications of what he writes need to be drawn out.

He rightly quotes the Swedish Royal Commission of 1950, for its report gives a clue to the official attitude to the Church. His second quotation bears reflecting upon.

> "Since", he quotes, "the number of those who value the Christian influence of the church and who are genuinely interested in her work, is appreciably greater than the number of those who actively participate . . . the opinion concerning women priests expressed by the authorised representatives of the people in Parliament must receive as much attention from the church as the views of its own people."

This is, of course, the kind of justification we could expect an arianising emperor to have gladly accepted. In the days when that heresy presented itself as a reasonable solution to problems in both church and state, the Church's "own people" were compelled for a time to endure the consequences of just such a point of view.

But closer reading of the Royal Commission's words shows that it no more than verbally recognises the Church's "own people". One may not argue, runs an earlier quotation,

> "that only its (the Church's) members should decide its internal affairs; it is . . . a national church, a part of the state, and this means that notice must be taken of the opinions to be found outside special church circles".

This proposition runs all the more strangely when one remembers that the Church has its own Assembly of bishops, priests, and

elected laymen. In a country where ninety-seven per cent are nominally church members and have their constitutional method for making their presence felt, it is foolish to argue that they need *another*, a political, organisation, to represent them in ecclesiastical affairs. The boot was obviously on the other leg : the report of the Royal Commission reflects the government concern lest the Church Assembly should not sufficiently represent the government. The Royal Commission in addition darkened counsel by speaking of "the views of special church circles". Mr. Toy seems to have bee n misled by these words and speaks of the nation at large as over against the church hierarchy. But this was not in fact the true opposition. What the Royal Commission meant became only too clear in the event : the rejection by the government of the decision of the Church Assembly in 1957, not to ordain women—a decision constitutionally and representatively arrived at by a large majority.

Here cannot be described the bitter struggle that led to a reversal of the decision a year later. The strength that decided the struggle was, as Mr. Toy implies, political strength though, as he says, other factors entered in.

What may be of interest to *Prism* and its readers is a brief account of the enormous change that has come over the idea behind the words "folk church" with which Mr. Toy begins his article. Fifty years or so ago Einar Billing, later a loved and respected bishop, said :

> "The Church of Sweden is the forgiveness of God to the people of Sweden."

His was an essentially missionary idea summed up in the slogan, "the people of Sweden a people of God". Once the missionary meaning slips out of view, the slogan becomes merely a debatable statement about a nation. Then, should the nation democratically declare its will, the slogan has the unhappy effect of canonising the votes of the majority. During the years a change of this sort has come over the "folk church" idea, as we can see from the Royal Commission's report, with the result that the majority now backing the women-priests finds it hard to know whether to recognise itself as a political or ecclesiastical majority. Either way, it gains a zeal and forces its will upon a minority. The minority, for their part, know well that they stand undeniably united with the Church of the Ages. It is this unhappy development which has helped towards a situation of real, though tolerably gloved, persecution.

Of the women-priest question itself, Mr. Toy says that the debate "has ranged over the whole field" of the subject. With due respect to Mr. Toy, this is true only in the very vaguest way. To an observer, there are theological woods and coverts that have never been drawn at all. Others seem to have been placed out of bounds. Lutheran theology is not at home in dealing with the theology of sacrifice, still less with the relation of the priest to the offering, or to

the sacrificial act. The theology of sex in relation to the theology of creation, and in particular to that of the image of God, is likewise no part of its main concern. Yet a living concern is needed if anything is to come out of a church which puts great reliance on the instinctive understanding of its people. A theology and a policy relating to the priesthood of women made without either popular experience or theological clarity in the matters mentioned is suspect from the start. To see such a policy and its consequences imposed on a united church would be sad enough. Yet it has in fact been imposed on a divided church, where the minority are known to feel bound to remain faithful to the rest of Christendom and to an express word of the Scriptures. It is this violence against both faith and fellowship which can reasonably be called a scandal.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *For reasons of space we were obliged to cut Mr. Toy's article last month.*

UNGODLY LITURGY?

Dear Sir,

I very much fear that Eric James, writing on inhuman liturgy (*Prism*, May) neglected to remember that the liturgical practice of the Church in the first century is not necessarily the best liturgical practice for today. The Church and its liturgy has developed over the past nineteen centuries.

Doubtless many Christian people have forgotten that the Eucharist is really a meal, but it does not follow that the Church should alter its present rites so drastically that they would cease to be rites at all, the Eucharist becoming an ordinary meal with a spiritual emphasis and *ex tempore* prayer. The answer to the layman's ignorance about the real significance of the Eucharist lies in better teaching, not in juggling with the Liturgy until it ceases to be a liturgy.

Yours faithfully,

MOOR PARK, FARNHAM. K. WILSON.

MORE RELIGION AT CAMBRIDGE

Dear Sir,

In the April issue of *Prism* your correspondent summed up religion at Cambridge by concluding that: "it talks too much. It does not pray enough. And that fundamentally is what ails it". There is at Cambridge one group of men that meets once a week just to pray. They are "The Servants of Christ the King": a movement begun some years ago to give practical expression to a "common concern" for our neighbour. Each group, or "company", takes on a specific task, like visiting old people or running a club, and meets regularly to pray about it, to "wait upon God"—our company is one among many others throughout the country, most

of them parochial. We don't evangelise, publicise, study, or discuss, but simply try to pray and help in a particular "common concern", believing that we, the Church, are called to this kind of discipleship today.

Yours sincerely,

CAMBRIDGE. SERVANTS OF CHRIST THE KING.

ECUMANIA

Sir,

ISKRA is well able to take care of himself but he seems to have a habit of disappearing from time to time. Whether or not he has himself not yet understood the "first truth of the ecumenical movement" (Mr. Coleman's phrase, June *Prism*) is a matter which only he can decide. Whether "the first truth" is in fact the one which Mr. Coleman thinks it is ("until the Church is visibly one, her proclamation of the Gospel remains distorted") is more open to theological debate. This dreary and eternally repeated platitude infers that the sacramental ministrations of a divided Church are somehow inadequate. And though this derives from the Bampton lectures of A. C. Headlam, Bishop of Gloucester in 1920, its venerable origin does not make it true. If it is accepted as a truth, with the various implications which Mr. Coleman derives from it, then we are of all men most miserable. It would seem that we are to postpone the mutual encouragement of one another by pastoral visitation of one another at Easter (ISKRA, May *Prism*) until we are in fact made one. Small wonder that Mr. Bernard Williams in his admirable article on the theological appearance of the Church of England derives from his experience the point of view he does. Can the pursuit of Christian unity, even when it is called the ecumenical movement, ever be a Christian end in itself? There seems to be something gravely wrong with a sacramental doctrine which leads Mr. Coleman to suppose that because his Presbyterian and Baptist brothers are absent he is eucharistically on his own. All I can suggest is a strong dose of St. Paul who emphasises the essential principle of Catholic truth: *totum in toto et totum in quolibet parte.* Is there anything essentially un-Christian in suggesting with regard to Baptists and Presbyterians that they are just wrong? To be able to say this and still live with them in charity was, so William Temple taught us, the real first truth of the ecumenical movement, a truth admirably reflected for us in the life and teaching of the Abbé Couterier. I am sorry that Mr. Coleman in his justifiable enthusiasm for visible unity should still attempt to find theological reasons for the pastoral neglect of our own fellow-Anglican Christians.

Yours etc.

BLOOMSBURY. GORDON PHILLIPS.

KELLY AND KELLYISM

Sir,

Of course the "Old Man" was not above criticism; he could even listen to it, as I know from personal experience. Fr. Gordon Philips admits that he only knew Fr. Kelly in his decline. I went to Kelham in 1909 and knew him in his hey-day. I was there when he brought a slop-pail into Chapel and set it before the Altar as the "text" of his address. I was also there (though not of the Chapter) when that very great man Fr. David Jenks took his place as Director.

One element in Fr. Kelly's character no-one, not even Bro. Every, seems to have mentioned, and that was his dealing with souls. As a very small boy I went to him twice in what to me was great trouble, and he listened for hours, once even dismissing his senior theological class because he judged my distress to be more important than their lecture. He certainly saved my reason, if not indeed my soul, and that by listening—by letting me pour out all the poison that had gathered. And I remember still the homely simile with which he summed it all up—the necessity of spreading out a dish-cloth to the air, instead of leaving it rolled up in a ball to go mouldy.

Nor was he "unduly optimistic" in imagining that he could teach the "ordinary man" to think. He could, and did. I went to Kelham after a good grammar school education and a grounding in the classics. But Kelham's (and Fr. Kelly's) great success in my day was with men who had left what we called "elementary school" at fourteen, and worked at an ordinary job till twenty or twenty-one or older, and who then started education again. Such men began miles behind me, and never of course became "scholars"; but they caught me up and passed me in their thinking. They would have left their mark on the Church but for the 1914—1918 War to which they went in a body—and from which they didn't come back God rest their souls—and the soul of him that taught them.

Yours sincerely,

CHESTER. JOHN BEDDOW.

REVD. TIMOTHY BEAUMONT is the new proprietor of *Time and Tide*; GLEN CAVALIERO is on the staff of Bishop's Hostel, Lincoln; JAMES MILLER has recently left Church House to train at Ridley Hall; G. C. DARTON is a partner in the publishing firm of Darton, Longman & Todd; LAURENCE DUNPHY is 100% dead-beat, which is quite different from a Beatnik.

Praying and Working

Sister Edna Mary, d.s.s., c.s.a.

If the Christian God—all wise, all powerful, yet all loving and infinitely concerned with the individual—exists at all, nobody and nothing could be more important or more relevant to the individual than He is. Therefore no activity could be more important or more relevant than that intercourse with Him whereby we discover His will for ourselves and for other people, and endeavour to attune our wills to His—in other words, prayer. But in what exactly does prayer consist?

Probably the vast majority of people equate prayer with petition and intercession. When they use the verb "to pray" they almost invariably follow it by the preposition "for". This usage is consonant with the widespread attitude which keeps God in the background as a resource when other hopes fail—an attitude vividly demonstrated by the disparity between the congregations in church on a national day of prayer in some emergency and those on an ordinary Sunday, or between the proportion of parochial prayers generally given to intercession and those given to thanksgiving. It is an attitude which represents the recognition of a truth : the utter dependence of man upon God. But it is an attitude which reflects only one aspect of that dependence and which shews little understanding of the total and all-embracing relationship of man to God, or of prayer as the reflection of that relationship.

For those who go beyond the idea of prayer as asking there seem to be two antithetical conceptions of prayer. Both would define it as communion with God. But how is this to be attained? On the one hand it may be regarded as the fruit of arduous spiritual exercises, of prolonged periods spent on one's knees following various prescribed "methods" and causing one to advance from a lower to a higher state of prayer, in rather the way that an athlete improves his performance by rigorous training. Seen only thus, prayer can easily be conceived as a specialist activity which in the circumstances of daily life must be left to those who have the inclination, the capacity, and the opportunity for such practices. Yet St. Paul, writing to very ordinary Christians whom he has been urging to settle down to business or an honest job of manual work, exhorts them to "pray without ceasing". He did not see prayer as just an activity for specialists ; and in reaction against the suggestion that this is what it is, others would claim that set times and practices do not come into the matter, but that prayer is the performance of all that one does to the glory of God ; as Ecclesiasticus writes of the artificers who have no time either to acquire "wisdom" or for the religious exercises

of the pious, but who "maintain the state of the world"—"in the handiwork of their craft is their prayer". Prayer, then, is a matter of doing the things of daily life well and in a spirit which regards them as done to the glory of God.

Both these views of course contain truth ; but when they are set in opposition the one to the other, or one is regarded as a sufficient definition of prayer to the exclusion of the other, the truth in them is forced into error. God makes demands upon the whole of human life, and nothing less than the whole of life is enough to offer Him ; but in the circumstances of existence here on earth much of our time has to be taken up in earning a living, eating and sleeping, physical recreation and all the other activities that are necessary to maintain the human life that He has given us, and which demand our concentration. Thus our minds and wills cannot always be concentrated upon God—nobody could cross a city street in safety if his whole attention were focussed upon God. *In these circumstances, God permits us to offer to Him, consciously and deliberately, a part of our life in token that the whole is His, that we exercise it in stewardship for Him, and that we are ready to surrender whatever else He may ask, even the whole.*

When we offer part of something to God, that part does not stand in opposition to the remainder which we keep for ourselves, but it represents the whole and in so doing expresses the consecration of the whole to the Giver. This is true of our material possessions. When the Jew offered to God the first lamb of his flock or the first sheaf of barley from his fields, it was not in the spirit "this is Yours, the rest is mine" ; rather it was with the words "so much You have done for me and given me, and here I offer the first fruits of what You have given, in token that all is Yours" (see for example Deut. 26. 5—6). Similarly, the Christian who gives his tithe or other proportion of his earnings in dues to the Church of God and alms to those in need, does not do so in the spirit of a man paying his income tax : "take this, this is your share ; and now leave me alone to enjoy the rest" ; rather he does it (or should) in the spirit "everything I have You have given me, and it belongs to You ; take this portion in token of the whole—the rest I will keep till You ask for it, and while I keep it will use it for You, seeing it as consecrated by this portion set aside".

As with material possessions, so with that even more precious commodity of time. Every moment that we have is given us by God and is to be used for His glory ; and that the whole may be so used, we set aside certain times to give them wholly to God apart from other concerns, in token of our recognition that all belongs to God, and as the means of consecrating the whole. Thus the Jew who said the Shema three times daily did so, not to discharge his whole duty to God thereby, but in token that the whole of his day was governed by the law of the Lord and thus dedicated to God—as he tended his sheep or went about his business affairs, all that he did was done in the spirit of the Shema. So also the early Christians kept the Jewish

hours of prayer, following the same practice of sanctifying the whole day of prayer at certain specified times. And when they met each Sunday to celebrate at the Eucharist the resurrection of the Lord, they did not do so in order that they might put it out of their minds for the rest of the week, but in order both to demonstrate and to secure that the whole of the rest of the week was lived in the power of the risen Lord and according to His will : whether it was Paul and Barrabas on their missionary journeys, or Dorcas at her works of mercy, or the countless unnamed Christians in their fields or their markets or their kitchens, every moment could be dedicated to God in the power of the resurrection life because of the times set apart each week for the worship of God and the reception of that life.

This is a principle which goes to the heart of the Christian life, and which finds its great expression in the sacramental life of the Church. Those who make fullest use of the sacraments of the Church do so not because they think that the rest of life is apart from God, but because they know that the rest of life is thereby consecrated. It has been written that "the true Christian devotion largely consists in raising tea-cups to the level of chalices, and wash-tubs to the level of fonts",* but this can be done only through the grace that flows from the chalice and the font. It is from the presence of Christ and His life received in the Eucharist that flows the consciousness of that presence and that life informing every moment of the day, it is from the assurance of forgiveness in absolution that flows the tranquil abiding in the forgiveness of God from moment to moment, and so on.

This principle, that the part deliberately offered to God both represents and effects the consecration of the whole, applies equally to the life of prayer. It is not a question of *either* offering to God special times set apart for prayer, *or* of making all that we do into a prayer. Rather it is by setting apart certain times specifically for prayer that we consecrate the whole of what we do to God ; our "prayer times" focus the prayer which is the offering of our daily work.

I suspect that this may evoke from some readers the cry of "monasticism", and it is true that this is the principle which underlies the Divine Office—whether it be the hours of prayer in a religious community or the daily office in a parish. For it is a principle which is as valid for secular life as it is for the religious life, although the application of it is necessarily different. Indeed, if it has proved necessary for even cloistered religious, the silence and whole organisation of whose lives is designed to facilitate recollection and continual prayer, to observe special times of worship as the means of maintaining the prayerfulness of the whole day, how much more are such times necessary for those who spend much of their day amongst the noise and inevitable distractions of daily life which

* v. *St. Raphael's Quarterly*, February, 1957, p.376.

sometimes render it so difficult to remember the presence of God. It is a truism that the person who declines to come to Church on the grounds that all places are equally holy and that he can worship God anywhere generally ends by worshipping God nowhere—although he may worship nature or beauty or something else. Similarly, the person who claims that he has no need for set times of prayer because he can pray all the time generally ends by not praying at all. He may have vague religious sentiments as he goes about his work; but sentiments are not prayer, and the will to offer to God all that one does and everyone whom one meets cannot be maintained (except perhaps by the greatest saints, and they are too wise to try) unless there are times when the will and mind can be directed to God alone without other concerns to divide them. Our greatest example of this is in the practice of Christ Himself; His whole life in every act was communion with and worship of the Father, and yet there were also those special times of prayer, sometimes throughout the night, which He spent alone with the Father.

So then it is not a question of "times of prayer" or "prayer all the time", but rather of times of prayer which make it possible to pray all the time. What does this mean in practice?

First it means putting aside, at the top of our list of priorities, some specified time each day to be given over entirely to God. How long and when is very much a matter of personal circumstances. There is much wisdom in the long experience which regards the early morning as a good time for prayer, because for many people the time before the day's activities are assumed is the easiest at which to pray with least distraction. But there is nothing sacrosanct about the early morning; and for many with meals to get and trains to catch some time later in the day is preferable. Not that I suggest dispensing entirely with morning and evening prayers, for whatever the rush everyone has enough time to say "good-morning" and "good-night" to God. But in essentials such prayers need only be brief—a dedication of the coming day to God, and prayer for direction and for those whom one will meet that day; a thanksgiving at night for the day safely passed, an act of penitence for sins committed, and commendation to God of the world and oneself for the coming night—the sort of prayers that are summed up in the hymn "Glory to thee, my God, this night . . ." (a hymn that can well be used for night prayers). This much is possible—two minutes perhaps? But if morning and evening prayers are to be so brief, then it is necessary to look for the time in the day when one can speak with God at greater leisure—when husband has gone to work and the children are at school or the babe having his morning sleep; during the lunch hour; on the way home from work. Given the will, and except in occasional emergencies, everyone can find some such time. For how long? Again this must depend on personal circumstances,

but would 15 minutes be an excessive demand? I do not think there are many people, however busy, who could not find 15 minutes at some time during the day for the fiancée suddenly in town or the old companion not seen for ages—and this is the sort of criterion to apply in planning times for prayer. This is the time when one can put aside other concerns and consciously take one's place in the never-ceasing worship which is the prime task of the Church in heaven and on earth, when one can come to God saying in effect "for the next 15 minutes—You only", can take time for proper preparation, time to look at God and adore Him simply for Himself and to acknowledge one's own sinfulness before Him, time to recall the benefits for which we have to thank Him, time to pray in orderly and disciplined manner for the needs of the world.

But it does not end there. It is the adoration and the penitence and the thanksgiving and the intercession of these brief spells when we can think only of God which are carried through into the rest of life and consecrate all those other moments when we must have our minds on other subjects. This is something which does not come naturally; and it needs to be carefully distinguished from that sense of being at peace with the world which results from a good meal or a fine day or a successfully concluded piece of business, and which can so easily masquerade as religious feeling. Like all prayer, it is not a matter of feeling but of deliberate direction of the will; and it is something to be acquired over a long period by disciplined practice, using at first small practical aids which may seem almost childish—the act of thanksgiving at passing a certain garden, the prayer for our colleagues as we enter the office door, and so on. Later such aids may become unnecessary, as our "prayer times" and our constant practice have formed in us the habit of lifting all that we do or encounter to God. In this way the adoration of the moments on our knees will overflow so that it is the context of all our work, natural activity in those moments when our minds being unoccupied turn back to God; our self-examination and acknowledgment of our sin to God will make us turn to Him in penitence the moment that we realise that we have sinned; our disciplined thanksgiving for all His gifts to us will be reflected in a spontaneous act of thanks at each good thing we encounter; our prayer for the needs of the world will make it natural for us to lift to God in prayer those with whom we come into contact from moment to moment. So our communion with God in the times we set apart for Him will spill over and inform the whole of our lives; and our constant practice of the presence of God will make us look forward the more eagerly to the times when we can give our whole attention to Him.

I suggest that it is Christian experience that these two aspects of prayer do develop side by side—and that for the reasons given it is inevitable that this should be so and that one side should not be able to develop properly without the other. Work and prayer are the two sides of the coin of the Christian life. To work is to pray—

but also to pray is to work ; and it is the work of prayer which transmutes our other work into prayer.

On how this works out in practice, in relation to different kinds of prayer, I will write in a series of shorter articles in subsequent months.

What is Man ?

What is MAN and how came he here
THAT is the question
which beguiles
    Philosophers
    Theologers
    Necromancers
    Astrologers
    Biologers
    and lots of others
What's the mystery, boys?
MAN is obviously
god's punishment
for some dreadful thing
the ANIMALS did

by LAURENCE DUNPHY.

from his book *Charnel House* (for the Dead Beat).

Books

Mixed Ministrations

EVERY MAN IN HIS MINISTRY by BASIL MINCHIN. *Darton, Longman and Todd*, 16s.

I wonder how many readers of this review have actually witnessed a "concelebration" of the eucharist by several priests standing at the altar together, with or without their bishop to lead them—or indeed have heard the expression used (apart from the Bishop of Woolwich's suggestions for

joint celebrations between Anglicans and Methodists, a use of the device about which this book is suitably cautious). The idea behind the practice is that all members of the Church who are present in one place shall participate in the one liturgy, and that they shall do so according to the function of their "order" in the Church. This of course raises special problems where there are several priests in one place. The established practice of the west has left them with two alternatives —to take part in the service as, in effect, lay communicants, or to arrange separate celebrations. The first of these deprives them of the opportunity of exercising their priestly ministry in the liturgy (and this, extended over any length of time, is more of a deprivation than most lay people realise); the second breaks up the one liturgy into fragments, and so obscures the organic unity, at the local level, of the Body of Christ. The device of concelebration is a means of avoiding this dilemma which deserves more consideration than it has so far received among us. It has remained the normal practice in the Orthodox Church (Dom Gregory Dix went seriously astray in saying that it "is not found entirely satisfactory even in the east": *Shape of the Liturgy*, p.484); there are vestigial survivals of it, for example, at ordinations, among Roman Catholics (some of whom, across the Channel, are now pressing for its revival); spasmodic experiments have been made with it by Anglicans, which this book claims could be substantially extended.

The new Secretary of the Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius has gone closely into the history, theology and contemporary practicality of this method of performing the holy mysteries, which he is careful to relate to the larger question of securing full participation in the worship of the Church by all orders from the bishop to the layman (including, not least, deacons existing in their own right and not merely as probationers for the priesthood). His findings, like his former ones on the celebration of the eucharist facing the people, should be useful to the increasing number of parish priests who are becoming dissatisfied with the stylized ceremonial of the middle ages on the one hand, or with the individualism of the "simple said service" on the other.

It still needs to be said that the theological case for concelebration does not stand or fall by Fr. Minchin's account of it. He has evidently reacted violently against sacerdotalism of the medieval type, and not all will share the somewhat uncritical enthusiasm for the standpoint of the volume *The Historic Episcopate* into which this reaction has led him. His determination to stretch to the furthest practical limits the possibilities of lay participation in the liturgy (even, under certain conditions, lay celebration) bring him near at times to a denial of the hierarchical principle altogether. These are, at worst, faults of emphasis; more seriously, he has tried to establish his case by an appeal to Christian origins, and the historico-theological argument which results has taken him completely out of his depth. It is no good, for instance, discussing the mind and practice of St. Paul and betraying no awareness that rather less than all the letters bearing his name actually came from his pen. It is no good going to the Acts of the Apostles for early Church history and not facing the difficulties of accepting its account at its face value (particularly in the early chapters and the episodes also covered by St. Paul) as a plain tale of what actually happened in the first days of the Church. And this is what Fr. Minchin has repeatedly done.

Fr. Minchin has established himself (as many will know from his broadcasts) as a pertinacious amateur student of the antiquities of Christian worship and of the history of its music, as well as an enthusiast for the liturgical revival. There would have been no reason to complain that he is not a New Testament pundit as well, if only he had shown some awareness of his limitations. They do not affect the practical contention of his book, and it is to be hoped that they will not deflect attention from it. But he would have been wiser to publish only the second half.

HUMPHREY GREEN.

Mrs. Krook's Book

THREE TRADITIONS OF MORAL THOUGHT by DOROTHEA KROOK. *C.U.P.* 30s. 0d.

This book begins with the *Gorgias* of Plato and ends with the Lambeth Report. It is a set of lectures written with a double purpose: to inform the youth of Cambridge about certain philosophical texts set for the English Tripos, and to sound the trumpet of a prophecy about *Messianic Humanism* which, Mrs. Krook tells us, is to be the religion of the future. Plato, Hume, Bradley and her other authors are set before us as the types, anti-types, and precursors of the newer faith, which, to Mrs. Krook, is a *religion,* not because it recognises a supreme being, but because of the intensity with which it apprehends and loves mankind. We should call it a mystique, and it differs from similar exaltations of humanity, say Shelley's or Comte's, because it recognises that man can be and is corrupt, and in need of redemption. For Mrs. Krook the agent of redemption is love, more specifically, sexual love. One chapter of her book is about *The Man Who Died* a quasi-mystical story in which D. H. Lawrence tried to use the story of our Lord's resurrection as a myth of the redeeming power of sexuality. This Mrs. Krook sees as prophetic of a transformation of Christianity, and, in an appendix, she acclaims the Lambeth Report on the Family as a sign that the Anglican Episcopate are already pilgrims to the new faith. I do not think Mrs. Krook knows many Anglican Bishops.

A great deal of the book is very moving, and Christians should read it to see what a compassionate and sensitive, but fundamentally sceptical mind, makes of their faith. But it is also very strange; Mrs. Krook does not altogether realise that strength of conviction is not sufficient to make so unusual a case. But it is not her doctrine which has made such a hubbub in the egg-head press: her personal qualities of candour and energy, serve her argument better than it deserves. No, it is not doctrine, but pedagogic method which provokes the liberal intellectual reaction to this book: Mrs. Krook is using the exposition of texts to present her own gospel, and in doing so she obviously presented students (these were lectures for the Tripos) with a biased and unjust account of certain authors, notably Aristotle and Hume. She is totally unaware of bias, but her method of interpretation ensures it. For she carries to an extreme the opinion of certain critics that the understanding of liturature is a matter of trained sensibility, that is of the critics' "awareness" of complexes of words and images, and she is equally convinced that philosophical texts must be treated as literature. This is a highly interesting point of view, but it has dangers. The extremist holds that enquiries about an author's intentions, or the historical context of his writings are irrelevant; this has led to startling results in literary criticism, and its effects on the history of philosophy are evident in this book. Collingwood suggests that philosophical theories take their shape from the questions urged on the philosopher by the beliefs of his time, but Mrs. Krook, with a brave innocence, assumes that Aristotle, St. Paul, and Matthew Arnold were all asking the same questions—her questions—and some of them were getting the wrong answers. This method has advantages; at least the texts are treated as live works, not museum pieces, but the fact remains that while Mrs. Krook insists on viewing Aristotle through St. Paul's spectacles, St. Paul through D. H. Lawrence's, and all in the glow of her own mission, she is sure to distort and disfigure some of her writers. The question is then, is the sting and stimulation of *Three Traditions* worth its want of objective scholarship?

I have to conclude, reluctantly, that it is not. Mrs. Krook's ideal is love, and love is surely not less than a respect, a sense of justice towards other men's minds. The academic virtues, dreary though they sometimes are, are still virtues. But this is not only a question of ethics. Mrs. Krook hopes that the truth of her argument will be measured by its coherence and consistency. This is old-fashioned of her; three hundred years of experimental science have taught us that a theory can be

thoroughly self-consistent, and yet remote from the facts. If however we accept Mrs. Krook's criterion we must say that her own method forces her to be incoherent. For she wants to tell us that a religion of love is independent of supernatural sanction, and that what *Messianic Humanism* contributes to this religion is its affirmation that sexual love as the "supremely redemptive" form of love. True to her conception of philosophy as literature she uses her texts as the images in which her ideal is shadowed forth, discerning in her *three traditions* the veiled shape of an "emergent humanism". But the minds of her authors are too great to be malleable to a lesser vision than their own. Though Mrs. Krook hears nothing but the dawn song of her faith, disturbed by the persistent oscillations of philosophical wrongheadedness, the reader hears what the philosophers actually say. No matter how neatly Mrs. Krook winds her humanistic ball, the ends of Plato's teaching, and St. Paul's and Hume's, hang out and disturb the symmetry.

I would like to pull one or two of those ends. Aristotle whose view of man Mrs. Krook calls low, was actually, and historically, dealing with a defect in Plato's philosophy. For *love* in Plato, and heaven knows Plato is seductive, is not love of one's fellows, sexual or otherwise, but the philosopher's love of the intelligible and the real. Plato may even be said to despise the uncontemplative, and even the organisation of *The Republic* is designed for the discipline of the philosopher-ruler, not for the *love* of the *hoi-polloi*. And just as it was Aristotle's task in philosophy to recall the philosopher to consider things and not the intelligible forms of things, so it was his task as a moralist to recall the citizen to the practice of virtue. Love in Plato is a species of knowledge; virtue in Aristotle is a species of action. For him, Justice, say, is doing the just thing. I cannot see that this is a low view of morality—though I can see it is less glamorous than anything in Plato. What is more, what Aristotle actually says seems to me to be more in accord with Mrs. Krook's ideal than Plato. Plato, after all, insists on that other world of reality which she considers is relevant.

And then there is St. Paul. Mrs. Krook admires St. Paul so much that she must and will have the Pauline doctrine, though she meets with the slight difficulty of St. Paul's belief in God and in the Resurrection. The Resurrection we can get round:

> "(Paul) failed to put first the essential meaning of the Resurrection as . . . the supreme symbolic affirmation of the profoundly redemptive experience of the indestructible power of love to transform and redeem the world . . . choosing instead to put all his emphasis upon the Resurrection as an historical event . . ."

I can scarce keep my patience with this kind of thing, to which the obvious objection is an historical one. St. Paul was a first-century Jew, not a nineteenth-century Romantic: the mode of thinking which Mrs. Krook rebukes him for rejecting is scarcely one that would even occur to a man of his generation and training. His belief in Christ as God is even more intransigent, and Mrs. Krook, uncharacteristically sidesteps it. She admits that the source of St. Paul's energy was his personal relationship with God, but does not choose to deal with the problems which it sets her. She also fails to deal with the questions which she herself raises about the corruption of the human heart and the nature of redemption.

For when we come to the centre of her argument we find her refusing to ask the relevant questions. Human love, especially sexual love is uniquely redemptive, and the story of the Christ is a symbolic myth of this truth. But what is meant by redemption? What is redeemed from what? Does she mean delivered from evil, changed or even humanised? Humanism is to transform Christianity, to render it finally efficacious. But Christians at least know what they mean by redeemed: they mean reconciled with God, and they know that their salvation is *now:* that it is the death of Christ which is the efficacious and redemptive sacrifice. But this is clearly not the kind of efficaciousness which is in Mrs. Krook's mind. Again sexual love is the agent of this ill-defined redemption: it is *the supremely redemptive form of love.* Now, in normal linguistic use, one is either redeemed or not redeemed . . . there are no comparatives. And one is bound to ask,

how does sexual love redeem . . . how does it *supremely* redeem? This difficulty is not only linguistic. Mrs. Krook's doctrine seems to me inconsistent here both with common sense and sommon observation. Human sexuality can be selfish, or bestial; in Lawrence, whom she admires, one suspects that sexuality is felt as the instrument of a personal domination. The fact is that sexuality is a physical phenomenon which is in itself morally neutral: it takes its moral significance from human attitudes. It is, if you like, transformed by love.

But in the long run this is not a matter which can be settled by argument. Mrs. Krook has a view of morality which is noble and compassionate and she believes that it is to transform Christianity. What she cannot know is how thin, how meagre, how intolerably colourless her Messianic Humanism appears to the Christian who has heard the *drawing of this love and the voice of this calling*. St. Augustine, whose mistaken view of sex she castigates, argues a rational case for sexual abstinence; so does St. Paul, and naturally it appears crude and unconvincing, until one reads two passages in the *Confessions*. One is St. Augustine's account of his conversion, the other his account of how he and St. Monica touched on, or *tasted* the vision of God. Mrs. Krook seems unable to understand what it is that the Christian *knows* when he is caught up into the rhythm of that divine love, or all human affections are consumed by it. In the long run Christianity is not sub-humanist, it is anti-humanist; humanity has not the final claim on the Christian, *God has*, we love our fellow-men in him and for him. And as to the love of God, let the saints speak:

> "(The Soul) without any exercise of thought rests quiet in the love of God, pure simple, and yet unknown . .
>
> "For when through love the soul goes beyond all work of the intellect and all images in the mind, and is rapt above itself . . . then is *God its peace and fulness*."

VALERIE PITT

THE FAITH OF A PHYSICIST by H. E. HUNTLEY.

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This book is intended to show to young people trying to decide on their career that the study of science is not incompatible with religious belief, and can also provide as balanced a way of life as the study of arts subjects. The author's recognition of the sense of awe inspired by many scientific discoveries, and the aesthetic appeal both of many empirical observations and of the forms of theories constructed about them, is surely valid. The book suffers, however, from an immaturity of style (notwithstanding that the author is evidently an elderly man) and a sentimentality of manner which are not impressive.

The author makes a passing reference to the contemporary interest in the philosophy of science, but seems to have been little influenced by it himself. He also makes the dangerous assertion that the blossoming of science is a revelation of God second only to the Incarnation. The material world is indeed, *in a sense*, a revelation of God, but in a different sense from the Incarnation. The author fails to appreciate the difference. Revelation is not the giving of facts, but the self-manifestation of God. The union of God with part of his creation (in the Incarnation) is plainly a different order of self-manifestation from the creation alone. Further, it is not *science* that is the lesser revelation: science only stands to the created world in a somewhat analogous fashion to that in which theology stands to the Incarnation (and the preparation for it). Science can no more be identified with the lesser, indirect revelation than theology with the greater and direct revelation.

This is plainly a sincere book, but, to this reviewer's mind at any rate, that is not enough to justify its having been published.

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